

#70

Lady Like

Exploring & Expressing Femininity

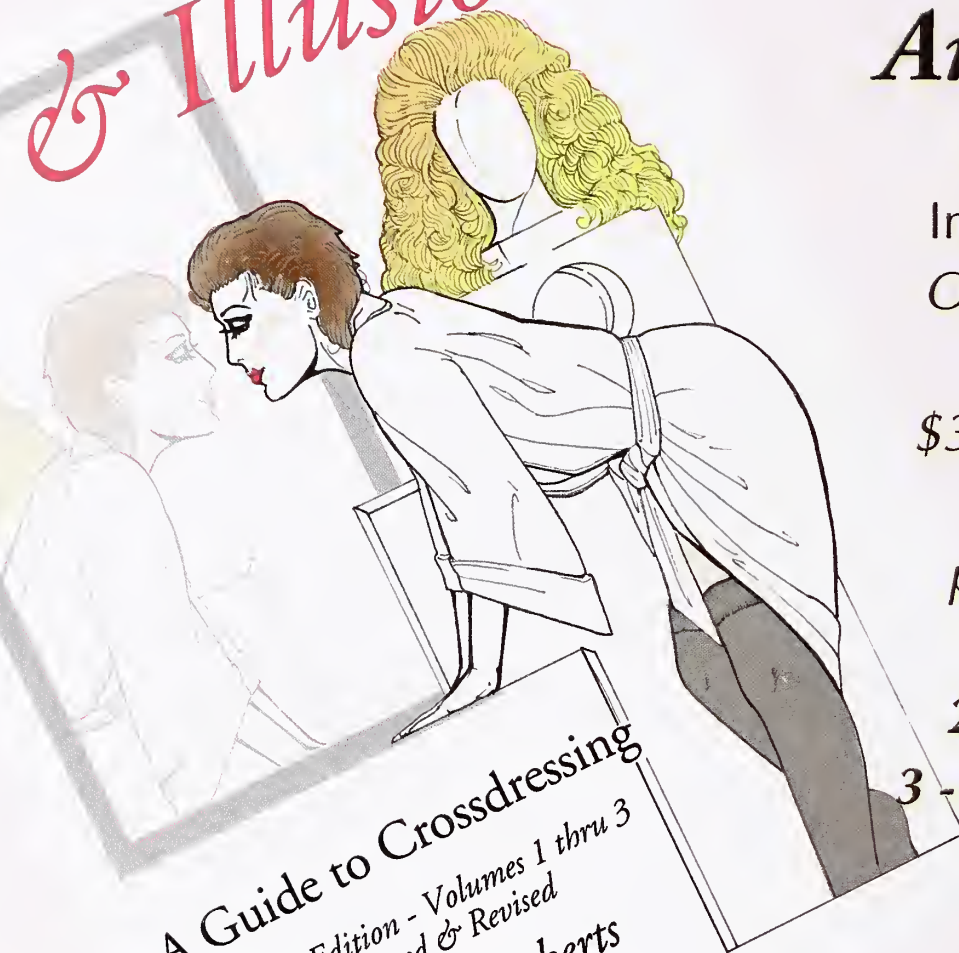


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LadyLike

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LadyLike

In This Issue

Features

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Winning a \$175 prize for your sexy nurse costume can't be all bad! Our gorgeous cover girl reveals all.

Holy \$#!% Batman

Our sweet Reverend Candy finds a sweetie of her own. Seek and ye shall find... your soul-mate.

M•A•C• Counter-Attack

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Kristen Ashley

Embers

Residence: Ohio

Profession: Finance

Age: 43

Height: 5' 12"

Weight: fluctuates

Shoe Size: 12

Perfume: Red Door, Opium

Make Up: MAC, Revlon

Color-Stay Lipstick

Favorite Clothes: short skirts, garter belt and stockings, high-heel pumps

Favorite Place: Vegas baby!

Favorite Movies: Airplane!,

Office Space, Blazing Saddles, Casablanca, and anything by Hitchcock.

Favorite Music: A little of everything except rap.

Turn Ons: Intelligence, open-minded GGs, leather

Turn Offs: Smoking, Reality TV.



LL: Hi Kristen! Thanks so much for being with us today and sharing your story with the readers.

K: Thank you for asking me. It's really my pleasure.

LL: Let's dive right in. How long have you been dressing up?

K: I've been dressing since I was four or five years old. My story is pretty similar to that of many crossdressers, in that I knew dressing up was not something that boys were supposed to do, so I did it in secret except for a couple of Halloweens.

LL: Some of us don't even have the courage for Halloween when we're young. I always went with a macho male costume just so folks wouldn't notice I liked feminine things. How many Halloweens did you dress and what were your costumes like?

K: I'm not sure how old I was the first time but I think I was around eight.

LL: Did you suggest dressing in a female costume?

K: It was actually my Mom's idea. She suggested I dress in an old bridesmaid dress of hers.

LL: What was the dress like?

K: It was a red taffeta, mid length gown and I loved it, but of course I played it cool and didn't let on how much I loved it.

LL: Why of course you didn't like it. We all understand that. (Wink, wink.)

K: Even though she suggested the dress don't think my Mom had anything to do with me becoming a crossdresser. I had dressed up in secret for years before that, and I really don't think my Mom had any idea. Anyway, I wore the dress, pantyhose, a pair of pumps, a wig and a little lipstick and some blush. The party was our church's annual Halloween party.

LL: How did your fellow costumed kids react to you in a dress?

K: None of the other kids made fun of me but a couple of adult women chaperones made a fuss over me. It was fun.

LL: When did you do it again?

K: In Junior High. I think it was one of the last times I went out for trick or treating (what some people call Beggars Night). I was at a loss for what to wear. Like you, I had gone macho for Halloween to avoid suspicion after that first time and I had finally run out of macho ideas. I was going to go trick or treating with a neighbor boy who had moved into the area a couple years prior. Well, the night came, and I still hadn't found anything to wear, when he showed up in his sister's skirt, knee high stockings, heels, sweater stuffed out with newspapers, and his longish hair feathered back (it was the mid '70s). So, I decided if he was cool with dressing like a girl, it would be okay if I did it too.

LL: And that way you could say it was always his idea. Brilliant!

K: Brilliant! Anyway, ideas were flying around and someone suggested that we all go out as a family (my two sisters were going with us, too) and I ended up dressing as the grandmother.

LL: Oh dear, a glamorous granny we hope?

K: Not exactly. For some reason we had a gray wig and a granny dress around the house. It wasn't exactly what I had in mind, but I didn't want to push things by insisting that I go as a sexy young girl.

LL: That's disappointing.

K: It was but I've made up for any regret in the years since. I've done it up for Halloween dressed as a sexy nurse (several times), sexy angel, biker babe, cheerleader, and a couple of other things I'm probably forgetting. I even won \$175 in a costume contest as the sexy nurse a couple of years ago.

LL: We've seen the picture and yes, that was worth a \$175 prize. Va va voom! But, back to how you got started on the road to winning that prize. Tell us more about your childhood and your family. It must have been handy to have a couple of sisters around so you could borrow their clothes.

K: My sisters are both younger than me, and yes, since I was very thin as a child, I could wear some of their clothes. That was enough for awhile and it wasn't until college that I started to assemble my own wardrobe.





LL: Quick! Your first pair of women's shoes?

K: I vividly remember the evening I bought my first pair of pumps at Pic-Way Shoes.

LL: Ah Pic-Way... Those were the days. But, how about that wardrobe you started to assemble during college?

K: I lived off campus and could dress at least one weekend a month when my roommate was away.

LL: Away from home and your roommate out of town—did you

every walk around the campus dressed?

K: I only ventured outside twice during those years. Once on a Halloween, and once very late on a Saturday night. Both times, I just drove around and then returned home.

LL: If we had all the gasoline that TGs have used to do those late night drive-arounds we'd have a large enough stockpile to stop being dependent on foreign oil for at least a few years. What happened after you left college?

K: After college I joined the family business and lived at home with my parents.

LL: Oooh, that's gotta slow up your feminine pursuits.

K: Yes, I didn't dress much. I could only dress around their schedule, since they didn't know.

LL: Did you ever get to go out anywhere when you did dress?

K: Never. We lived in rural Pennsylvania and there was nowhere to go, anyway. I did take periodic trips to the adult bookstore that was an hour away, and there among the adult-oriented magazines, I found a copy of TV/TS Tapestry and then later, LadyLike. They were the first magazines I found that didn't portray crossdressing in a lurid way.

LL: That's always been our goal. Sexy yes, lurid no. What happened next?

LL: In the mid '90s I decided that I didn't want to work in the family business and I returned to school part-time to get my masters. At the same time, my need to dress grew stronger or at least I didn't suppress it as much. I opened a PO Box and put an ad in Tapestry. I heard from about thirty CDs and two genetic females. I also joined the Erie Sisters support group.

LL: Tell us about your first time at the support group.

K: I got a hotel room, got dressed and somehow made it from the motel room to the car and drove to the Erie Sisters meeting. That was the first time I met other people like me.

LL: What did you think and feel when you met the other girls?

K: For one thing I was surprised that a number of the girls had wives who didn't know, didn't approve, or at best were just tolerant of their husband's femme desires. Most of the girls had not told their wives they were CDs before they married. I understood why they didn't tell—fear of losing someone they loved, the thought that the love of a good woman would cure their need to dress, etc., but I didn't think it was fair to the wives not to tell them beforehand. I decided that any woman I wanted to be seriously involved with would have to know I was a CD. Of course, that was a relatively easy decision for a thirty year old virgin who had never had a serious girlfriend! I also figured that there were very few (if any) females who liked femme guys—but then I met one at





the gay bar where most of the Erie group would go after the meetings.

LL: How did that work out?

K: The relationship didn't go anywhere, but it gave me hope.

LL: How did you come up with your name?

K: I didn't have a name until I placed that ad. I guess I didn't need one until then. I never cared for the femme version of my male name, so I felt free in choosing a totally new one. I actually chose the last name first. I had stayed at the Embers convention center in Hershey and liked the smoldering aspect of Embers as a last name. I tried out several first names with it and had nearly settled on Ashley—after Ashley Abbott on the Young and Restless, but there seemed to be a number of Ashleys around. I almost went with Cassandra,

who was another character on Y & R, but I settled on Kristen after the name just sort of came to me. And I liked the way it sounded with Ashley as a middle name.

LL: And so Kristen Ashley Embers was born! And she had met other CDs. What happened next?

K: After grad school, I moved to a major midwest city for a new job. I didn't know anyone, so I tried one of those "chat lines" that you see advertised in the city weekly papers. I was honest about who, and what I was in my profile, and was pleasantly surprised to have a number of positive replies. I met and dated several women from the line. I had a four year relationship with one woman, an on again, off again relationship with another woman who worked part-time as a professional dominatrix, and I also met the woman I've been seeing for the past couple of years. She's been very supportive, and is going with me next month to the Diva Las Vegas event.

LL: You're very open with your dates. How about your family and friends?

K: While I've been "out" to the women I've dated, and some of their friends, I'm not out at work or with most of my family. I work in a conservative corporate environment, and I don't think I could still be "one

of the guys" if "the guys" knew about Kristen. I told my youngest sister, because I thought someone in the family should know just in case something ever happened to me, but she's the only one of my family who knows. I also told my best friend from high school when he accidentally saw a few pictures around seven years ago. I also have a close platonic GG friend who knows. In fact, she's gone with me the past two years to the Diva event. Kristen actually attended a time share presentation with her there last year!

LL: What kinds of things have you done while dressed?

K: I've done several things at Diva Las Vegas that I'd been wanting to do en femme. Kristen went golfing, had a dance lesson, went on a limo tour of some of the casinos, and by the end of the week was brave enough (or foolhardy enough) to fly home dressed.

LL: What about non-Las Vegas adventures?

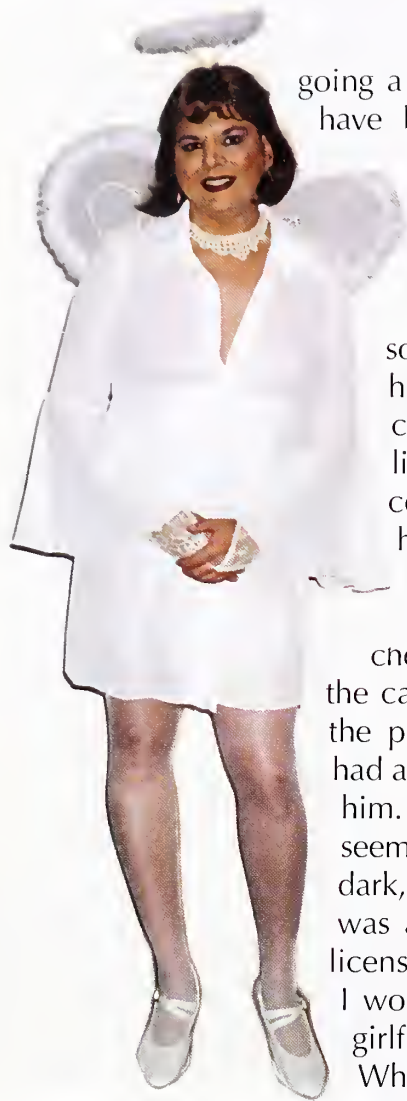
K: I've been out shopping and dining. I've been to four of the Erie Gala weekends, going back to when they were the old Erie Riverside Galas. I was at the Be-All the last year it was in Pittsburgh. I've been on several weekend vacations with no male clothes, including a riverboat cruise in Louisville, and I've been to several BDSM events. I've also been pulled over by the police dressed!

LL: How did that go?

K: Cops. (Singing) Whatcha gonna do when they come for you? My experience has been that the police were very professional when they stopped me. I was pulled over once for speeding by a Sheriff's Deputy. He was very professional and just gave me a warning, which was the first time I had ever gotten away with a warning, so maybe cops are easier on women! I wasn't exceeding the speed limit by that much, so it did occur to me that maybe he stopped me just to get a better look, but I don't think that was the case.

LL: Well, a sexy young lady





going a bit over the limit? He could have been checking you out. Ya never know...

K: The other time I was pulled over, we were in my ex-girlfriend's car and she was driving. There was some sort of mix-up at the DMV and her tags had expired and to complicate matters her driver's license had expired too. A city cop pulled us over and made her go back and sit in the cruiser while he wrote things up and ran the background check. When he came back to the car where I was still sitting on the passenger side, he asked if I had a valid license, which I gave to him. He looked at it and kind of seemed surprised (it was night and dark, so I don't think he realized I was a CD until he saw my male license). He gave it back, and said I would have to drive as my ex-girlfriend's license had expired. When he was through writing up

and said when the cop came back to the cruiser after seeing my license he asked her if I was her boyfriend. She said "yes" and he said, "He's pretty". And she said "Yes he is, thanks".

LL: That's pretty funny!

K: Yes, and she said he said it matter-of-factly and she thought he meant it as a compliment or at worst, an observation. Anyway, he was very professional to me.

LL: Well whatever he meant you are very pretty. I hope it doesn't sound to rude but have you had any work done?

K: In the last few years I've taken some steps to help make the transformation easier. I've had laser and electrolysis on my beard, and I took hormones for a couple of years.

LL: I hope you consulted a doctor about that.

K: Of course! I grew some nice breasts, but I also put on a bit of weight, which I had to struggle to lose.

LL: Female hormones can cause weight gain and usually not all where you would like to see it. Was that what made you stop taking them?

K: Well, I decided to stop to help

reverse the weight gain and I was afraid they were beginning to affect "performance".

LL: They can do that. So the enhancements you've had are just to make dressing easier?

K: Yes. I have no plans for SRS or to transition and live full-time as a woman. As I've said many times, being a girl all the time is too much work! I like having the option of either role. Like any girl... I want it all!

LL: The end of our space is rapidly growing nearer. Are there any final thoughts you'd like to share with the readers?

K: I guess the only final thoughts I have would be regarding relationships. I would encourage everyone to be open with a potential partner once they've decided to pursue a serious relationship. I'm not saying that you should tell every woman that you go on a date with that you like to wear panties (or guy that you date that you wear boxer shorts), but once you've decided that they are someone you would like to get serious with, I think it's only fair that they know. A lot of the women that I've talked to who had "found out" their spouse dressed, were more concerned about the deception of not being told than they were about the actual crossdressing. Hopefully by the time you decide that you want to get serious with someone, you know them well enough to gauge how they might react. Remember, there are women out there who will accept a crossdresser into their lives given the chance to make the decision.

LL: Words of wisdom! Honesty is the best policy. Thanks for sharing your story with us today!



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Mirror Mirror



Kalina Isato with a copy of her issue of LadyLike.



Sally Weber, #451A



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Pricilla, Connecticut



Foxy Roxy



Cat Turner, Luran Thomas and Barbara Ann Coombs at Winter Party Festival in Miami this past February.

Holy \$#!% Batman!

My wife died 8 years ago. She never knew, nor would she have wanted to know, Candy. Two years after her death I relocated to a smaller church in the area where I was born and grew up. If I have any roots it would be here. My children are grown and did not need to know about Candy. So I would be alone no matter what the location. I was exploring Candy's existence and trying to give her a life that would offer some joy and satisfaction.

However, I found that my alone time was far more deadly than I

ever imagined. I dated a very pretty lady in my congregation, but when I told her about Candy the ride was over. I then decided that I would have to keep Candy to herself and out of relationships. I dated some other ladies yet each one had no future because Candy was not going away, and I was not in love with any of them.

One very nice lady contacted me due to *LadyLike*. I enjoyed her company because she appreciated and understood Candy. We shopped together for Candy and that was so much fun. She helped me grow sexually and that was good for me. She was into bondage and I neither understand that aspect nor can I grasp the roles that must be played. It was never a relationship that had a future, but it taught me that real girls could deal with Candy.

In my role as pastor of an active church I did a great deal of counseling. One very pretty lady with whom I worked for four years was in the midst of a 25 year bad marriage. Her husband, in theological terms, was a "turd". They had not slept together in more than 15 years, nor had he worked over half the time. She worked two and three jobs to raise her children and send them to college. If the truth be known I had really fallen for her about the first time I saw her. However, I am a professional and never allowed my personal feelings to come out. I found out later that she had the same feelings.

After almost four years of counseling I told her about Candy. She was pouring out her soul and I really needed to share my life as well. She was enthralled and wanted to see Candy in the flesh. By this time I am retired and working out of my home. The next time she came and for four times there after Candy was here when she arrived. There are few joys for a CD greater than being accepted by a very pretty woman while you are in female persona. She was always anxious to see any recent pictures that I had taken.

Despite my efforts, and I did try, her



marriage did break up and she moved in with her family. By this time I was so in love with her that I was almost a basket case. Imagine a Size 4 gorgeous blonde, a lot younger than I was also in love with me. Not only did she love Candy and buying clothes, shoes, etc., for me; I was having a ball buying those same things for her! I'll find a dress, sweater, top, etc., and hold it as I call for her and find that she is holding up the same item. Often we'd get the same shoes for both of us. She loves high heels, makeup, jewelry, long nails, having her hair done, laughing, and me.

The sex was the most incredible of my life, ever. The first time that we made love her first comments was, "Holy Shit, Batman!" How could you not love a girl like that?

I am a guy who likes to dress up like a girl who is madly in love with a pure doll. She loves me from the inside out, and not the outside in; and more than that she loves ALL OF ME. I never even dared to pray that someone like her would ever come along because I thought I knew full well that such a person did not exist. I consider

now that I won the richest power ball lottery in history.

All right, how did I do it? My Christian background says this was God's plan for me. My human grasp of life says I'll be damned if I know. I am either the most blessed person in the whole world or the luckiest. Either way, I found out who David and Candy both are. That alone is a miracle.

I enjoy dressing far more now, and never thought that could be possible. I cherish making love in ways I never dreamed existed. I love doing everything possible that can be done together. I even do her makeup each morning before she goes to work which is so much fun. Now, what advice do I have for all of you who have not found perfection in a Size 4 blonde or what ever size... I have no idea what to tell you except keep looking because there might be one or two more out there.

Love, Candy [snickrs@connectnc.net]

P.S. I married this wonderful girl in November of 2006.

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Reality Check

Angela Gardner

"Ch, ch, ch, changes!"

"It was twenty years ago today, Sgt. Pepper taught the band to play."

Two quotes near and dear to me and growing more true day after day. (Was that another lyric?) The first one means I look back on the past few decades and say to myself, "what a long strange trip it's been." (Maybe I'm taking the lyric quotes too far?) The second one should be paraphrased to read, "JoAnn Roberts taught the band to play". And it wasn't a band but a transgender support group. It was 1987 when JoAnn, myself and a cast of co-conspirators started **The Renaissance Education Association, Inc.** and I started a personal journey that has taken me to places I never dreamed I would go.

The official 20th Anniversary of **Renaissance** was this May and I attended a talk by TG pioneer **Dr. Renée Richards** at Equality Forum in Philadelphia early in that month. The two events made my addled old brain start to hum along the highway of reminiscence. Or it may be that that just happens to you when you hit a "certain age". After all, when you're 15 it's hard to reminisce—you don't have that much to look back at. "Boy I miss my blankie." "Wonder what my old baby sitter is up to?"

When you've got a few years behind you, every now and then you pull them out, dust them off and take a look. Looking back at mine I remember being a closeted, heterosexual crossdresser whose biggest joy was getting dressed up privately and then watching television for a while, taking a picture or two of myself (OK, or 20), then taking it all off and going to bed. Since it took me over three or four hours to get dressed in the first place that pretty much took up most of the evening.

Through an ad in *Tapestry* I met JoAnn Roberts. This was just as I had begun to take some steps outside my house, and just began to get used to the sound of my high heels clicking

on the sidewalk. (I still love that sound!) I found crossdresser parties in New Jersey and went to them for a year or so when I took Jo along one night. After that party she started to make noises about us forming an actual nonprofit support group in Pennsylvania. I agreed. (Primarily because I hated going through the toll booths on the bridge.) We found some other folks who thought the idea was good and soon we were taking meetings and planning for the first **Renaissance** meeting. That was in 1987.

So much has changed since then. Even **Renaissance** changed its name. We picked **Renaissance Education Association, Inc.** so that it would be more of an anonymous organization, not easily associated with "transgender". Years later the name was changed to the **Renaissance Transgender Association, Inc.** for the exact opposite reason. (And, "Education" kept getting us inquiries from people who wanted information on the Renaissance period or from prisoners who thought we could help them get a high school diploma.)

Since that first **Renaissance** meeting I have changed from a once a month closet crossdresser to a weekly party girl going to New York City nightclubs (my '80s-'90s period), to being a TG spokesperson on television talk shows, to becoming a TG writer and editor, to coming "out" in my showbiz work place and doing TG roles in films and TV. (**AbFab** remains my biggest triumph.)

The world has changed since then, too. As **Renée Richards** said in her talk on May 6th, when she changed gender there was no such thing as transition. You had to disappear as your old gender and show up some place as the brand new you. She said she didn't know what "stealth" meant till just recently. In her day she called it fading into the woodwork. Now, while the woodwork still holds a large number of transgender people who don't want anyone to



Dr. Renée Richards holds a copy of the last issue of LadyLike.

know about them, there are even larger numbers of people who are coming out, telling the world who they are and the world is accepting them for who they are.

It's not 100% safe yet. There will always be people who can't accept those who are differently gendered and this world, changed as it is, is not perfect. It will always have intolerance, from the kind that looks at you funny to the kind that wants to blow you up. We may never escape that kind of thing, at least in our lifetimes. But, we have made enormous strides. If you ask people what "transgender" means many of them will have at least heard the word. If you ask them who **RuPaul** is chances are they'll recognize the name. **Eddie Izzard** has single-handedly given the words "transvestite" and "crossdresser" a face—a funny and friendly face. And **Dr. Richards**, who never wanted to be the poster child of transsexuality, is now an elegant senior lady who has her important place in the evolution of our community and is able to reminisce about a time when there was no transgender community. Twenty to thirty years on how far will we have gone? Only time will tell.

But enough of this deep thought stuff! It's time to settle down and dive into the fun of issue 70 of *LadyLike*! Enjoy!

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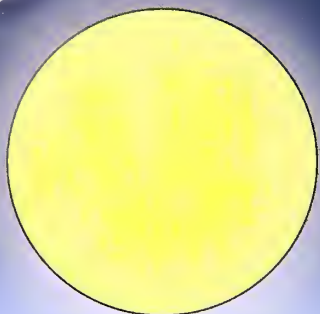
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Night Moves

Diva Las Vegas

By Kristen Ashley Embers

The eleventh annual “*Diva Las Vegas*” (DLV) event was held April 23-28, 2007 in fabulous **Las Vegas, Nevada**. DLV is a week-long opportunity to be out and about among the glitz and glamour of Vegas. Billed as a “vacation, not a convention”, DLV is different from most TG events in that it is more informal and less structured. It’s more of an informal get-together and opportunity to dress in a mainstream environment. There are no educational meetings, seminars, speakers, or vendors, so there is no need for a central hotel designated as the “event hotel” and no “larger closet” feeling. You are free to stay at your favorite Las Vegas hotel or look for a deal.

Speaking of deals, there is no registration fee. All costs are on-your-own and are determined by where you choose to stay, where you choose to



Kristen Ashley Embers dining high above Las Vegas.



Annie, the 2007 Diva Las Vegas Golf Champion.

eat, and by any activities in which you choose to participate. Some of the daytime activities scheduled for the 2007 event included: a **Lake**

Mead cruise, the annual **DLV golf tournament**, **English High Tea**, an art tour of a local museum and the **Ansel Adams exhibit** at the **Bellagio**, a dance lesson at Arthur Murray, and a two-brid e commitment ceremony at a Vegas wedding chapel. Nighttime activities included: nightly happy hours and restaurant options, a bar crawl, a limo tour with stops at several casinos for photo opportunities, sampling Vegas nightlife, and trips to several Vegas shows. This year the group went to see “O” at the **Bellagio**, and “Love” at the **Mirage**.

There were CD, MtF TS, FtM TS, SO, GG and the entire TG alphabet soup in attendance. Everyone is welcome. Thanks to the many hardworking volunteers who organize this event. You can find out more information on next year’s event by going to the DLV website: www.geekbabe.com/dlv/ or googling “*Diva Las Vegas*”.

Universal Grille, Cincinnati

By Ronnie Rho

Cincinnati has a reputation as a very conservative city. After all, we gave **Robert Maplethorpe** a lot of grief, and battled **Larry Flynt** in court. But we were also, at one point, known as the **Queen City**. And if you look around, that title is still appropriate.

There are the big clubs, **Adonis** and the **Dock**, which have regular drag shows. There's a country-themed GLBT

bar, **Shooters**, and **Yadda's**, which put on their own smaller productions. For friendly neighborhood bars, I can't say enough about the **Little Bit Bar**, and **Rosie's**. They're old-fashioned corner bars where everyone is everyone else's friend.

Of course, the place I'm most fond of is what used to be **Hamburger Mary's**: a nationwide chain of GLBT-friendly bar & grills. Except in **Cincinnati**, where they broke off relations, leaving the name, but retaining the staff and the spirit. It's now **Universal Grille**, but it's no less cool.

Universal Grille, in the heart of downtown Cincinnati, is perhaps best known locally for karaoke night: it's been voted the best in the city by readers of one of the local entertainment papers. Every Thursday, anyone with the guts to get up, can get up and belt out their favorite tune. It doesn't matter if you're a bad singer, no-one's paying much attention anyway. And if you happen to be a gifted singer, you'll get everyone listening, dancing, and singing along.

Other nights there are special performances, including Cincy's own **Vicki D'Salle**, a regular at **Southern Comfort**, playing jazz and blues standards during happy hour. On other nights, there's a DJ, or even a VJ playing music and videos. The dance floor isn't very big, but **UG** is the kind of place where dancing isn't limited to one area.

On the other side of the building, away from the bar, is the restaurant. It's quieter and cozier; a good place

to meet friends for conversation over a bite. The food is delicious, but it is a little bit on the pricy side: Salads are around \$8.00, entrees start at \$10, and go up to \$25 for a pair of 4 ounce steaks.

The staff and the patrons are a mix of gay, straight, lesbian, and trans. And everyone is welcome, as long as you're there to have fun. As a matter of fact, I've met non-trans people there who've become friends across the rest of my life.

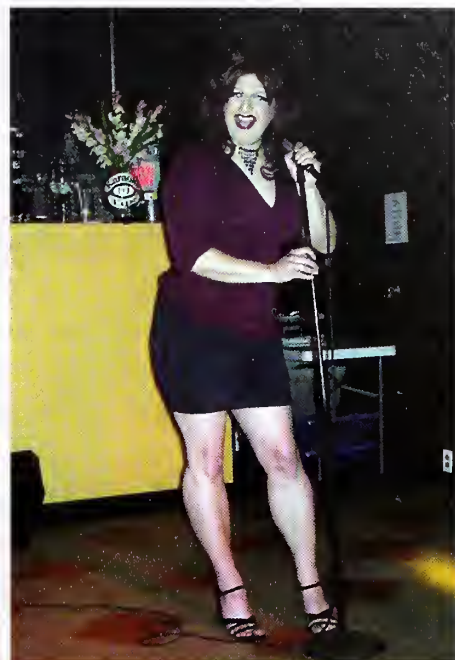
If you're ever in **Cincinnati** on a Thursday night, stop by. You might just catch me refusing to give up the microphone. Again.

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Letters

She's Done Be-All

Dear JoAnn and Angela, and all the LadyLike readers,

This is a much belated THANK YOU to the organizers and advertisers of the Be-All in Chicago last year. It is because of your dedication to femininity and beauty that I was able to enjoy such a wonderful time at the event. I have always hung back because I "just knew" that I was not pretty enough to fit into such groups. Instead, I was made to feel welcome, not in spite of who I am, but because of it. It was a wonderful feeling!



I know most people just wanted to do the fun parts (dances, pool party, dinner parties and shopping trips, ect.) but I thought the best part was the educational forums. I especially enjoyed the chance to meet Alice Novic and listen to her lecture; she is a great inspiration for all us girls who want to live "a balanced life". I also wanted to thank all of the vendors, but especially the makeup artist from Janna's Place Emporium, she managed to turn straw into gold (even if it was for only a brief time).

I could gush on, but the short version is that I want to encourage everyone who has not attended such an event to do so! I believe it was a turning point in my life. I am no longer dreading the future as much, because I

have seen that it is possible to age not just gracefully, but beautifully. I have seen it done by everyone who was there! That goes double for the "youth contingent" who were there with their parents.

Kathryn Elliot, St. Louis, # 4715

Yes Kathryn, attending a big event at least once is a good idea. It really does give you some perspective and help you realize you are not alone and you are not the only TG who thinks she is "straw" but has gold waiting to shine through. As for aging gracefully all you need to do is hang out with the LadyLike staff.

On The Road Again

Dear JoAnn,

It has been too long since I let my subscription to LadyLike expire, so with this letter I submit my renewal. You do such a wonderful job of covering our soft and special nature with class and respect. Thank you so much!

Also with my renewal I have included several photos. Most are from an outing to a beautiful little Canadian village on Lake Huron, Bayfield, Ontario. I spent two day there, and was warmly welcomed by our neighbors to the north. Bayfield has a lovely beach, two fabulous restaurants, and, of course, outstanding shopping. My favorite memory is reading my book, *The Girl With The Pearl Earrings*, while enjoying a glass of wine in the garden behind the historic Little Inn of Bayfield. I would recommend that experience to every girl!

Also included in the few photos are two from a spring outing to Columbus, Ohio. I stayed downtown in the restored, grand Great Southern Hotel, and enjoyed a local performance of *Cat On A Hot Tin Roof*.

It's just so much fun being a girl!

Love and Kisses,

Marsha Lakey

PO Box 84 Sandusky, OH 44871 #2360

marshalakey@hotmail.com



We would love to have included more of your photos Marsha but

you used a felt tipped marker to add your address to the back of each one and the black ink managed to get on to the front of each picture leaving black speckles all over your lovely self. Please ladies! No felt markers unless they are absolutely indelible and won't rub off. In fact, as long as you include the information in your accompanying letter there's really no need to put anything on the photos. We'll figure it out. We managed to salvage the photos of Marsha in this issue but it took some work in Photoshop. Give us more free time to have fun, no more magic markers.

Spouse Is A LL Fan

Dear JoAnn and Angela,

I have just gotten through reading LL #68. Not only was I surprised, but impressed! I have had the opportunity of seeing and attempting to read several other TG/CD oriented magazines, all have been a disappointment. Yours however, was not only well written, but done in a way that was organized, interesting, and professional. Kudos to you and the staff! Well done.

As a person who loves to read and spends a lot of my time doing so, I was impressed. As I had said, the previous magazines I had seen and attempted to read



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were done in a helter skelter way that was not only difficult to read but to follow the article I was attempting to read.

LadyLike also provides me with knowledge. As corny as it sounds knowledge is power, power that can never be taken away. Your magazine fits that bill for me. It provides an honest and human side of our lifestyle, which most think is sick or perverted. With the exception of location, Joanna's life mirrors mine.

The interview with Joanna was well written, in a journalistic, but personable way. Unlike so many interviews that are written in a mundane way that if listened to would be done in a monotone manner. Yours however was enlightening, funny, and poignant. If there is one down side to the whole thing it's the fact that you're a quarterly publication and just not enough info...

In closing I again would like to thank you. I am impressed and just to give you an idea of how well your magazine is written, my wife has spent the last couple of hours reading it and was also impressed with the content. Her first comment was that it was, "interesting, informative, but NO smut". As understanding and supportive as she is and remains, LL has done more in two hours to help with her understanding our/my lifestyle than I have in the five or so years I have been since coming out to her.

Sincerely,
Marcie Renee Sexton
Southern West Virginia

Smut—never had it. Never will.

Close Call

Hi Angela,

I just wanted to let you know that the "weight for dress saga" has been slowed. My wife has a medical issue which we are dealing with. Everything should be OK, but we are spending a lot of time and effort to make sure. Needless to say I still haven't reached my goal weight and, sad to say, have put on a couple, but I know the prize is there so it will happen.

I have made contact with a couple of ladies through the magazine and they have been quite helpful. One had a lot of the same issues early on that I am now dealing with now. The information and communication has just been great to let me know that I am not alone. Two others have been great as friends to talk to about daily events or just a little girl talk. I thank all of you.

Something happened the other day that I feel you might like to hear about. I went up to my cottage in northern Michigan the second weekend in April. There was about ten inches of snow and not much

to do outside, so I decided Carolyn would enjoy the weekend. I got "dressed" for breakfast and just did a little reading (*Ladylike*). That afternoon I changed to a more formal outfit and decided to sort through all my female belongings. It was enjoyable. I tried on everything to check the fit (some things were big—yay), practiced with my makeup and hairdos. Early evening, I got dressed for dinner and decided to have a grilled chicken breast. The grill was in the attached garage so I knew I would not have to go out to cook. I had just got into the garage when I heard a car pull into the driveway. PANIC! There aren't any windows in the front of the garage so I couldn't see who it was. I thought it might be my wife, one of my kids or a friend, so I couldn't just stay there, I had to move. I heard a door open at which time I ran through the very open, windowed breezeway back into the house proper. My heart was going a thousand mile an hour, I just knew I was caught. I quickly peaked out the window and saw it was one of my neighbors, but did they see me run through the breezeway? They knocked and tried to peek in, I just froze. They finally left and I was still very nervous. I waited a while and then I just had to know, so I called their house. She answered and I asked if that was them that had stopped by. I explained I was in the basement and didn't get upstairs until they were pulling away. She said they had stopped but after ringing the bell and not seeing any signs of life they left. "NOT SEEING ANY SIGNS OF LIFE"! They didn't see me run through the breezeway. I sat there for a minute to get my composure back and then I went back to the garage and finished my grilling. I then sat down for a relaxing dinner, relieved my secret was still safe. I enjoyed the rest of the weekend.

I'm sure everyone reading this has had a close call or two and maybe getting caught is inevitable, but it sure is nice to have a magazine and friends who you don't have to hide from. Maybe this is just another step in the direction of total self acceptance. I hope so, because every day I enjoy being me.

Always with Hugs,
Carolyn Kay
SpecialKmi2@aol.com

We've all been there Carolyn. And while we always urge our readers to be proud of who they are we know it's difficult to deal with a situation in which someone you know (who cares what strangers think!) may be exposed to the other side of you that they have no idea exists.

I recently had an encounter with my neighbor. I live in a building with only four apartments and the guy in the very next apartment was at the door of the building when I came home late one night. As I approached I evaluated my options. I could turn and run off around the building giving him time to get in before trying it myself. Or I could try to slow up a bit and hope he got in and up the stairs before I got

to the door. Then there was option three, the one I picked. I walked on up and as he opened the door I was right there. He gallantly held the door. I said "thanks" in my best femme voice and sailed up the steps to my apartment, entering my door before he got upstairs.

For several weeks I didn't see him around the building (he uses it as a part time residence for work reasons) and wondered what he had thought of the tall blonde who went into my apartment. When I finally did see him again (me in my male disguise) he acted the same as ever, a smiling, friendly neighbor. I still have no idea what he thought and unlike Carolyn's situation where she has known her neighbors for years, I don't really know this guy more than to say hello to in the hall. I did have the concern that it might have proven awkward if he had realized the tall blonde was me but since no difference has appeared in our neighborly relationship then it doesn't really matter what he thought.

Angela,

I was reading our local newspaper when I came across a article under the police report, with the heading, "Man's changing room exploits well known at Goodwill store".

Employees at the Goodwill Industries Store reported that a male was browsing through women's clothing,



selected several items and entered a changing room. He exited minutes later and left the store. The manager told police the subject frequents the store and only buys woman's clothing."

Sometimes it's hard enough to muster up the courage to go shopping for woman's clothing, but this type of negative publicity casts a darker shadow over the ladies who like to shop openly or discreetly. How we act in public greatly influences the way people react to us and the way we are treated, each of us needs to always be at our best and try to project as positive an image as possible, we want people to accept us for who we are, not what they may think we are. This concerned me because this occurred within eight miles of where I live, and ladies it was not me.

I was looking at the TGForum website when I saw that issue #68 of *LadyLike* was in the mail, I stopped everything and went to my P.O. Box to see if the new issue had arrived, I was disappointed not to find it, but I knew it would arrive soon. When I checked the next day there it was, just seeing the envelope in my mail box made my day, I was so excited I went right home and read it from cover to cover.

I am enclosing a couple of pictures, I hope that they are good enough to use in one of the up coming additions of the wonderful *LadyLike* magazine.

Again, I can't thank the staff of *LadyLike* enough for all of the hard work you are doing to provide us with such a wonderful publication. I hope that all of the other ladies appreciate and enjoy it as much as I do. Please let us know what we can do to help support you in all of your efforts.

Lucinda Grace

4182

lucinda@tgforum.com

Yes Lucinda, it behooves us to all act *LadyLike* when we're out and about. But, I have to wonder why this story was news at all? Did the Goodwill shopper steal the things he had taken to the changing room? Or were the police called because a man went into the changing room with ladies garments? That's not made clear. As you point out, sneaking around the store, looking furtive is bad enough for our image but if he actually stole things that's really no good. On the other hand, if the store called the cops and all he had done was try on some skirts and dresses that would be a real negative mark against them.

Hi Angela

Just read the latest *LL* and it is great. I did as you suggested, put on my favorite outfit and curled up with a couple of martinis (no tea for this girl) and read it cover to cover.

I am so glad you were able to print my picture in the *Mirror/Mirror* section. Thank you again for the time you spent helping me to scan and email pictures in the

Letters

proper format size. Your Reality Check articles are light hearted but contain good messages which are right on the money. I am planning another photo shoot and will forward the best ones to you.

Once again thanx for a great publication and I look forward to many many more.

Hugs
Pricilla



Dear JoAnn and Angela,

I enjoyed the photos and interview with Helen Wong in LL #67 and Angela in her column asked readers if they like to see more Profile articles of girls like Helen in the future. Please add my vote to the YES column.

As an observation, and in my opinion, Helen is a rare beauty. The majority of us that CD are likely never to look as good. But most of us aren't full time—we lead two lives—what the world sees as our male selves and then, that special time when we get to dress and makeup as our feminine selves.

That time, the femme time, is way too short.

My best to both of you and others on the staff.

Love,
Fran Belskey
#4593

Thanks Fran. It was my thought that the readers would enjoy a glimpse into the life of someone who not only is femme full-time but whose occupation is in an industry that prizes glamour. I'm glad you enjoyed it.

To share your thoughts with Ladylike readers send your letters and photos to the postal address on the contents page or, if you have a computer and Internet access, email the directly to angela@cdspub.com. Be sure to include any info you want published (like your contact information) and put "Letter for Ladylike" in the subject line.



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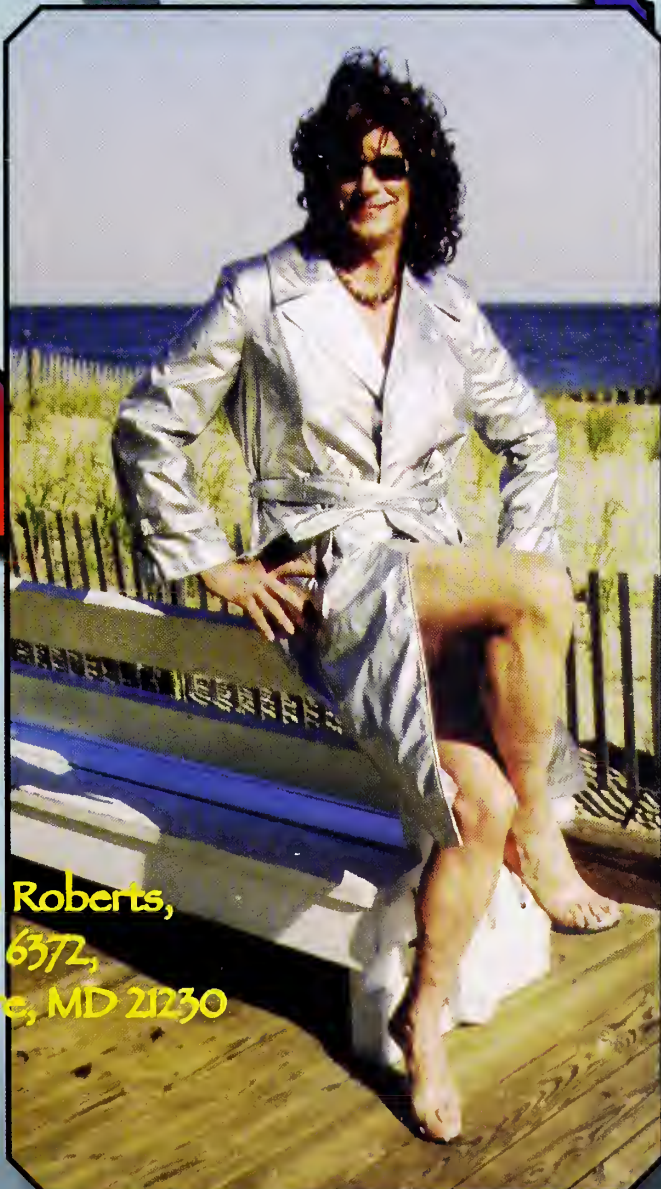
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MirrorMirror



Angela Gardner



Kathryn Elliott,
St. Louis, MO, #4715,
at the Be-All pool party with
the pool party dancers.



JoAnn...mine *



Michelle, Ohio



Dina's Diner

We live in a culture that thrives on scandal. And thanks to the Internet and cable news channels, there is plenty of scandal and personal embarrassment out there to keep us all ensconced in our collective schadenfreude. And as a group whose members are mostly trying to keep our crossdressing interests and activities as secret and personal as possible, we may also have a fleeting feeling of "There but for the grace of God, go I."



Case in point, the Ohio fireman who was arrested on a variety of alcohol related offenses while cavorting in a cheap blonde wig and teeny female bikini in a public park. The Internet quickly got hold of the poor guy's mug shot (which was taken in full regalia) and one can only imagine how he will ever explain that—no matter how much alcohol was involved. "OK, Steve, we know you were pretty wasted—but what's up with the bikini, wig, and falsies, dude?"

Now comes news that a Washington DC proprietress of an escort service has delivered phone numbers of thousands of clients to ABC News after her indictment on prostitution and money laundering charges. One high ranking State Department official has already resigned. He admits using the escort service but only for legal massages. Where did we hear that excuse before? Evangelical leader Rev. Ted Haggard, who said the same thing when confronted with a gay escort's accusation against him. Oh, yes, the State Department official was in charge of promoting the Bush Administration's sexual abstinence programs overseas. No scandal really cooks until you throw in some hypocrisy.

I remembered reading about a panty thief in early April 2007, so I did an Internet search for the term "panty thief April 2007" and got dozens of hits about more than one panty thief. One Japanese website even had hidden video footage of a high school teacher stealing

panties and brassieres out of an apartment laundry room. Another, funnier, story featured the 20-year old panty thief who was caught by a woman's husband and got his ass beat pretty bad. His police booking shot showed a severely bruised, bandaged and pretty forlorn-looking mug. Police found a locker in his room with over fifty pounds of presumably stolen panties. Remember when men had hobbies like building ships in bottles? No, neither do I.

YOUR BRAIN IS SO-O-O-O- SEXY!

An April 10, 2007 New York Times article covered some interesting new developments in the science of sexual desire. Apparently—and somewhat surprisingly, I think—lingerie and high heels do not play a part in the science of sexual desire. Nor does Vodka, which I find even more puzzling.

The Times article by Nicholas Wade focused solely on academic studies and theories of how genetics, hormones, and brain functions work on our sexual orientation, and the search for sexual partners. The article also included discussion about recent theories on a hereditary cause for homosexuality.

The main thrust of the article is that humans are organisms that are guided to a large degree by the science coursing through our genetic mapping and even what we believe to be our rational intelligence is still affected by—if not completely controlled by—our genetics. Oh, yes, the scientists also confirm that men and women see the world differently. "Techniques for imaging the brain have begun to show that men and women use their brains in different ways even when doing the same thing. In the case of the amygdala, a pair of organs that helps prioritize memories according to their emotional strength, women use the left amygdala for this purpose but men tend to use the right."

One simplistic view says that men see women as sexually desirable in a physical sense; women see men in terms of ability to provide and protect. The strength of genetically encoded sexual orientation was proven with the help of males who, because of intersexuality or botched surgical procedures, were raised as females yet who still reported sexual desire for other females. No clothing or socialization can trump the genetically programmed brain in the area of sexual orientation.

Recently, an evangelical Christian pastor acknowledged that science may soon discover that homosexuality is a genetic event. If so, the knee-jerk reaction against homosexuality may need to be reevaluated. Unless they just decide to disbelieve the science—which is my bet. But really, all of us should be a little freaked out by these scientific discoveries. Not in the sense of disbelieving science if and when it is proven, but in the sense that we are close to discovering just how mechanical and un-artful the human experience may be at its core. We may just be a load of random neurons, hormones, and genes that fall into a certain pattern and the rest is fairly predictable.

One very interesting idea that is raised in the article is that women may be naturally, genetically bisexual, according to sex expert Dr. J. Michael Bailey of Northwestern University. Oh, that is so hot! Tell me more, doc. “In experiments in which subjects are shown photographs of desirable men or women, straight men are aroused by women, gay men by men. Such experiments do not show the same clear divide with women. Whether women describe themselves as straight or lesbian, their sexual arousal seems to be relatively indiscriminate. They get aroused by both male and female images,” Dr. Bailey said. “I’m not even sure females have a sexual orientation. But they have sexual preferences. Women are very picky, and most choose to have sex with men.” And some women choose to do soft-porn lesbo movies on Cinemax.

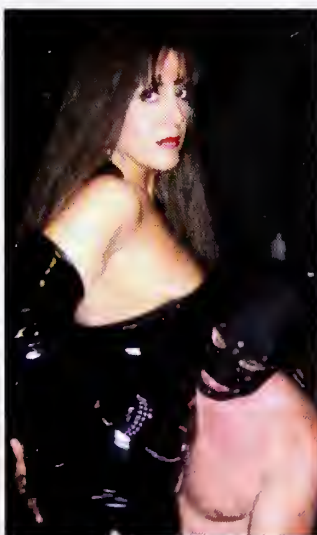
You gotta love the brain.

MISTRESS MESHUGGA

I saw this item on the MSNBC.com website in March 2007 and thought it was short enough and conjured up enough mental images to reprint in its entirety here:

“March 1, 2007 NEW YORK—A dominatrix was arrested on prostitution charges at a suburban estate that she leased from the rabbinical school next door, and school officials faced the unusual prospect of having to cleanse the building once the whips and chains are gone. “Once everything is out, there has to be a spiritual cleansing” said Rabbi Samuel of the Orthodox Khal Adas Kashau yeshiva. “We won’t go close to that place until they move out. No, no, no, heaven forbid.”

Sandra Chemero, 46, was charged Wednesday with prostitution and criminal possession of a stun gun at what she called The Sovereign Estate, four acres in tony



Bedford that she leased last year. The rabbi said “I’ve never heard such a thing, and I don’t want to hear about it. It’s terrible.” The rabbi said yeshiva officials immediately ordered [Mistress] Chemero’s eviction on grounds that she broke the lease by engaging in illegal activity and using the home for a business. Chemero could not immediately be reached for comment. She has a residential phone in Connecticut, but the number is unlisted.

She advertised her services on a Web site, promising that the estate was “a place like no other. There is something unique about serving your mistress in a home designed and appointed especially for her enjoyment.” Photos showed the dominatrix in spiked heels and a low-cut, one-piece black outfit, with a chain around her waist. Bedford police Lt. Robert Mazurak called the arrest “very unusual for someone in this town” which is home to Martha Stewart, Ralph Lauren and Glenn Close. “It’s a quality-of-life issue. We acted rather quickly” he said. Although there is nothing illegal about working as a dominatrix, Chemero was arrested after a police investigation that began in December turned up evidence of prostitution.”

In my never-ending quest for enlightenment about the important issues of the day, I did some more digging into this story. And yes, as you might have guessed, crossdressing plays at least a small part in the drama. According to an article posted on Yahoo Answers.com, “Meanwhile, Bedford cops pressed ahead with their investigation yesterday as a woman who used Sandra Chemero’s rented house as a place to sell makeup and clothing to crossdressing men said the accused madam had a female partner in the S&M business several months ago. After an argument with Sandra, the other woman moved out of the house in September, the makeup artist said. Asked if a second woman was involved, Bedford Police Lt. Robert Mazurak replied: “I’m not going to say no, but I don’t want to mislead you ... It’s under investigation.” According to a SM-BD blog, someone familiar with Ms. Chemero blames the whole mess on the former business partner, who apparently dropped a dime on the Mistress.

Life is sometimes a bitch—even for a professional bitch.

IT'S GOOD TO BE THE KING!

CNN.com carried an article on April 26, 2007 about Cinthia Covarrubias, a female student who will be allowed to compete for the title of Prom King at a high school in Fresno, California. School administrators reversed their first decision to disallow her from competing after school district lawyers advised them that state diversity rules were in Ms. Covarrubias’ favor. It is believed to be the first time a transgender student

will compete for Prom royalty.

It seems that transgender students are making news at high school proms every year by attending in attire of the opposite gender to one degree of acceptance or another. This is the first instance, I believe, of a female-to-male transgender person rocking the prom boat.

Ms. Covarrubias is a Mexican immigrant and struggled with gender identity in her Hispanic culture and family unit. "My freshman year I just started feeling different," she said. "When I decided to change to be like this, all of a sudden I said, 'Wow, I feel OK. I feel like finally I'm being me.' "

Leanne Reyes, a female student at the school, said this to the CNN reporter: "It's not like the stereotype where the king has to be a jock and he's there with the cheerleaders anymore," said Reyes, a senior. "We live in a generation now where dudes are chicks and chicks are dudes." Tiffani Sanchez, a science teacher who advises the school's Gay-Straight Alliance, said the decision would foster understanding of the broad spectrum of gender identities. "Cinthia is still really learning who she is," she said. "We want her to know that there's a safe space for her here and we support her."

Cinthia's date is a female friend who plans to wear a black dress and corsage.

For her part, Cinthia is quoted as saying: "I would

never have run for anything if I had to wear a dress" and the article continues that Cinthia "is giddily looking forward to the prom, but acknowledged being a little nervous. 'I'm happy I actually made a difference about changing the law and the policy so you can run for your choice,' Covarrubias said."

SEX SERIES FINALLY BOTTOMS OUT

MSNBC.com has been running a series of online features about modern sexuality by writer Brian Alexander. The March 1, 2007 edition covered the topic of anal sex, which is hot right now. I mean it's always been hot—I guess I should say that interest in anal sex is running very high among heterosexual singles and couples as never before.

Mr. Alexander cites a number of anal sex how-to books that have either come out recently or are expected to come out soon. But don't take Alexander's word for it, ask your local bookseller if they have a copy of "Anal Sex for Couples: A Guaranteed Guide to Painless Pleasure." Or just ask if they have Prince Albert in a can. There's a pun in there somewhere. But I interrupted myself.

The experts attribute the rise in interest in anal sex to pornography, which has anal sex scenes up the wazoo nowadays—in case any of you aren't familiar with current trends in pornography. Mark Schoen, a sex



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researcher, says that anal sex is sort of where oral sex was in the 1970's. Now, couples and even acquaintances can discuss oral sex without being viewed as perverted. Schoen thinks anal sex will soon be less taboo and open for frank discussion between partners and confidants. The water cooler is about to become a more interesting place to hang out.

And it isn't just the women who are backing into acceptance of anal sex. Heterosexual men are also exploring the pleasures of penetration with their female partners. A Houston medical company sold only a few units a year of an anally-inserted prostate massage device. When they marketed it as a sex toy, the demand went up by 100%. The company's online forum gets postings from the medically necessary users to those who use the product recreationally.

Tristin Taormino, who has an anal sex how-to book and an instructional video out now, says, "The rise of men being vocal and open about the fact that 'I am straight and I enjoy anal on the receiving end' is a huge trend. There are videos like Bend Over Boyfriend and I get dozens of letters per day from men asking questions like where can I find a woman who will perform anal sex?"

Geez, just a short while ago, men were happy to get laid at all. I guess that's progress.



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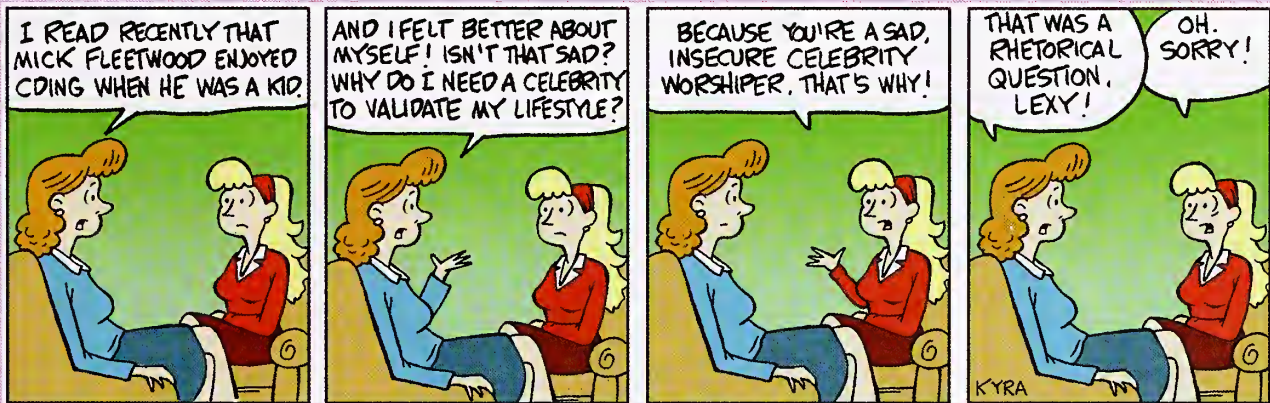
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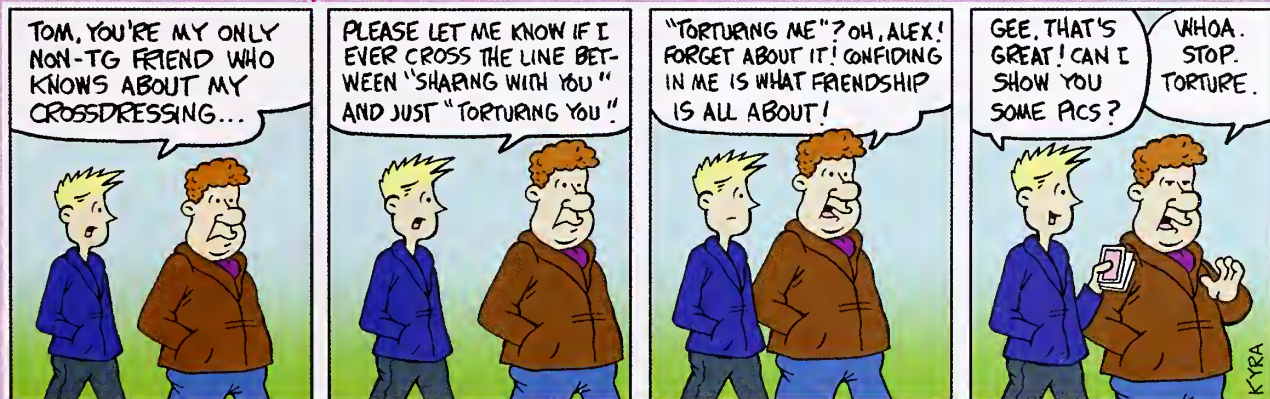
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Mirror Mirror



Jan,
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Jackie Thomas, #3392



Sally Viola, #4374,
after an Amanda
Richards makeover.



Susie Williamson, #4645

In Issue #67 Barbara Anne Love took us on a visit to the MAC cosmetic counter for a makeover. This issue she's back, taking us to the MAC Technique Clinic in...

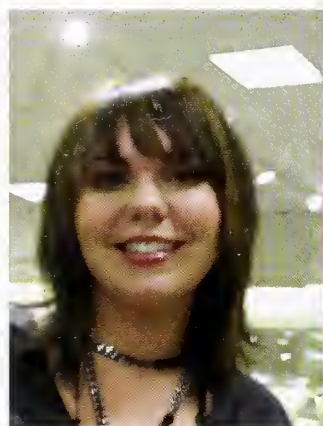
MAC Counter-Attack

By Barbara Anne Love

Time to continue our heroine's journey through the ultimate cosmetics endeavor—the MAC Technique Clinic held on a late January afternoon at Nordstrom's in the Westfield Mall in Tukwila, Washington. Shannon, my glamour professional extraordinaire, thought that my life would not be complete until I attended a MAC Technique Seminar. Being easily persuaded concerning all things feminine my attendance was regarded by all as a *fait accompli*.

Being uninitiated into this feminine rite-of-passage I was somewhat unprepared for the thirty other attendees, GGs of all shapes and sizes. Did I really need to do this? Was this pushing my "passability" envelope too far? Would the GGs shun me like damaged pantyhose? Once again, attitude, attitude, attitude saved the day. The effervescent MAC staff, as always, made me feel real and the guests followed their positive lead.

A charming MAC hostess had me sign the guest roster and pick up my blank facial silhouette. It was time to attempt GG chatter for about ten minutes, and try to



**Shannon, My MAC
"Magic Lady"**



Brianna (MAC Agent)

look my tranny best as the guests kept queuing all around.

Looking at the lipstick display was a real education in euphemisms—who stays up all night thinking of names like "Plum Nectar", "Raspberry Delight", "Champagne Kiss", "Berry Madness, etc.? There must have been a zillion different color choices and finishes—semi-gloss, glossy, matte and on, and on. To pick the appropriate tranny color would most likely require a multi-megabyte computer algorithm solution. Ah, the things your mother forgot to tell you during those formative years. Having a

big or even a little sister certainly would have been a big help. Then suddenly it was time to go upstairs get on with the show. The GGs plus moi all chose a seat and settled down. On stage was Noel B., a Lisa Minelli-clone who looked better than the real deal. She was definitely at home on stage. (She was

not very hard on these mascara-laden eyes, if you catch my drift.) Things were looking very good until she finally launched into the secret GG realm of face creams, lotions, cleansers, concealers, conditioners, hydrating agents, defoliants, all of course with their matching applicator brushes. Most likely, not even Van Gogh or Rembrandt required such an extensive and expensive brush collection. More decisions to follow! Golly, does the GG brain have a special area devoted just to makeup, its appropriate use and how to actually decipher all that beauty jargon? How do all of these feminine chemical creations fit into the average bathroom—much less a handbag? More importantly, how does one actually afford this never-

ending plethora of "must-have" items? And, how does one know how and when to apply all these nostrums? Perhaps guy-mode has more



**MAC Mistress of
Ceremonies**



advantages than previously considered?

This seminar focused on the "Spring-Look"—which translated into brightening, soft-colors, and existing "asset" enhancement. Then it was on to skin-care, foundation, eyes, and lips. The section on skin care and foundation was as complex as any college-level differential calculus course. Let's keep the proper sequence: (1) Moisturizer, (2) prep and prime those epithelials, (3) fast-response eye cream to smooth away wrinkles (4) eye concealer to remove those ghastly purple shadows, (5) loose-blot powder to create that natural matte-look, (6) blush to liven those sallow cheekbones, (7) finishing-powder to add "soft-focus" to facial skin. Ready for your test, have you memorized the items and application order yet?

The eyes were another make-up subspecialty—first one choses from the color palette that suits your fancy—like Sultrous or Amazon (actual names!). Can't go wrong with either one, but first let me examine the state of my checking account balance. Okay, proceeding further, one applies eye-shadow base (crease color first, lid color second) and, of course, the correct brush and application technique for just the right look. Don't forget that fluid line on the eyelid—special eye gel and an angle brush gets the job done right (personally, this is very, very good stuff)! Mascara application to follow—ladies, don't forget to pitch your MAC or Maybelline after 6-8 weeks or your will risk infection and/or dreaded mascara-clumping. For those with bravado and a steady hand, false eyelashes add the finishing touch. Time to take a break. Are you sure you still want to be do this part-time? Oh, and don't forget that eye-makeup remover for those potential make-up faux faux!

Now with your attention span and bank account rapidly dwindling, it's time to decorate those sex-pot, pouty lips. Not so fast, first let's hydrate those pretty puppies with some Prep Prime (say this sentence rapidly three times). Next fill in any unsightly lip-lines with a creamstick lip liner, and finally apply the color de jour in, of course, Love-Nectar luster lips gloss. Should one assume that eating, drinking, and any physical activity is out of the question. Perhaps a good polyurethane coating or two might preserve all this effort. And I'll bet you thought looking pretty was easy—think again, my lovely friends.

On the other hand, one look in the mirror after this labor of love, and time to reach for the digital camera to record this special magic moment. Never in a million years did you think you could look so good, especially after this wearying nonstop makeup marathon. Enjoy these moments before the lip gloss wears off and little tiny dark facial hairs poke through those expensive layers of makeup. Alas, the ball is over for you tonight, Cinderella.



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Candy



Beverly, #5903,
Are ya ready boots?



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Current Queens *by Vicky Vogue*

JAZELLE

Take The Follies Bergere, La Cage Aux Folles, and the Las Vegas Strip. Mix them all together, throw in a heaping helping of Salsa Caliente, and what do you have? You have JAZELLE of course.

I heard about Jazelle from Angela Gardner, the editor of LadyLike. She thought she might be a good candidate for my Current Queen column and she was right on the money. As soon as I visited Jazelle's wonderful

website I knew immediately that I wanted to interview her. I wrote her an email telling her about the column and the magazine, and asking her if she would be interested. She promptly answered, "You bet I would".

Jazelle is a 27 year old who hails from Decatur, Georgia which is a town just outside of Atlanta. I remember when I visited Atlanta many moons ago and I was enthralled by its cosmopolitan sophistication coupled with that laid back Georgia Peach languor and lifestyle. What a perfect place for Jazelle to reign in all her glory. And I really do mean glory. Jazelle is the personification of The American Showgirl with her outré outfits and elaborate headdresses which, incidentally, she makes herself.

But, as usual, I am getting ahead of myself here so let me un-digress. Jazelle began doing female impersonation on Halloween in 2001. It wasn't until about two years ago that she was really bitten by the bug called drag. And then she took off like a Roman Candle and she hasn't slowed down since then. She entered the famous, fabulous Charlie Brown Drag Idol competition and did nine weeks of sheer "dragony" up until the final night of the pageant when she won by a landslide and captured the coveted title.

After winning that contest she began touring all over the south east U. S. of A. She worked at clubs in Georgia, Alabama, North Carolina and Tennessee to name just a few. She also became the newest member of the gem of the South, the Charlie Brown Cabaret at Hoedowns.

I asked Jazelle who her role models were. She mentioned her drag mother Nicole Paige Brooks, The Goddess Raven, and of course the legendary Charlie Brown who has been a headliner on the drag scene for more decades than I will mention being the nice girl that I am. I can only say that Charlie Brown is world renowned and world respected as a one of a kind true to life DIVA.

Most of Jazelle's performing has been solo lip sync numbers but she did say that she is planning to take





dance lessons with an eye to doing production numbers. I can just see her atop a Busby Berkeley wedding cake in a remake of *Forty Second Street*. Look out Gwen Verdon and Chita Rivera. Here comes Jazelle!

Because Jazelle is a professional performer, and those costumes cost a Drag Queen's Ransom, she is paid for most of the shows she does. However, she still manages to do shows for charity, especially for gay youth and for people in drug or alcohol recovery. She feels it is very important to "give back" and she always makes sure that she does.

Actually Jazelle is herself in a recovery program and has been sober for two years. She wanted me to say so in this article because she understands the importance of sharing her story so that people will realize that not all of those in "the biz" are into substance abuse. I applaud Jazelle for her honesty and candor in this regard. And I feel especially close to her because I am also a recovering alcoholic. I have a few years on her, like about twenty five, but that doesn't matter. Every day of sobriety is a day to celebrate and cherish. All I can say is keep up the good work Jazelle. And I know that she will.

For more information about Jazelle visit her on myspace and at her website [www.jazelle.net].



Mirror Mirror



Elizabeth Hulbeck,
PO Box 1731,
Auburn, NY 13021

Michelle,
Hudson Valley, NY,
#667





Barbara Roberts,
PO Box 6372,
Baltimore, MD 21230



Marcie Renee Sexton,
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Mirror/Mirror



Lucinda Grace,
#4182

Jan, Easter Ohio,
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Lisa Anne, Wisconsin,
Brunette!



Sally Viola, #4374,
after an Amanda
Richards makeover.



Amanda Richards

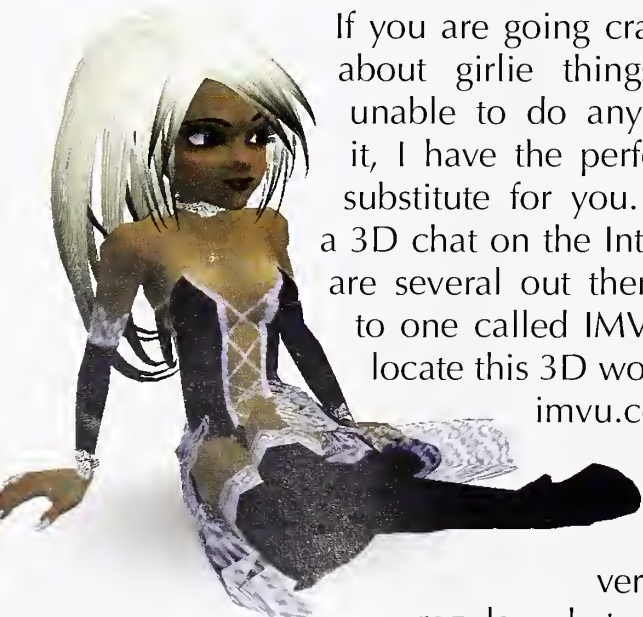
Summer Diversions

Hope you are all having a wonderful summer. If you are like me and continue to dress during the summer months, then you are fortunate. Most t-girls go in to hibernation between Memorial Day and Labor Day each year. It's an issue of shaving, and going to the beach, and the fact that wigs can be just plain hot in the middle of July.

To help you get through to the end of summer, I've compiled a list of some things that you might want to check out. Some are inspirational and educational, and some are just entertaining time wasters.

IMVU 3D Chat and Avatars

If you are going crazy thinking about girlie things, and are unable to do anything about it, I have the perfect summer substitute for you. Try joining a 3D chat on the Internet. There are several out there. I belong to one called IMVU. You can locate this 3D world at www.imvu.com.



These chats are very similar to regular chat rooms with

one very important difference. You get to create an avatar or 3D representation of yourself to participate. You can pick out the body, the facial features, the hair, clothes, everything! This has obvious implications and advantages for a cooped up t-girl with a desperate need to shop and get glamorous.

Joining is free.



Upon registering you will be asked to fill in some general information, and to select a basic avatar or image for your presence in the IMVU universe. You will also be given an account of credits to get you started. You can take this account and begin to personalize your avatar. You can get her a new outfit, new hair, new eyes,

new lips, new jewelry, new skin tone, bigger breasts, a house, furniture for that house. Your avatar can be the girl next door, the glamorous movie star, the dominatrix, the Goth chic down the block or anything else your imagination can provide.

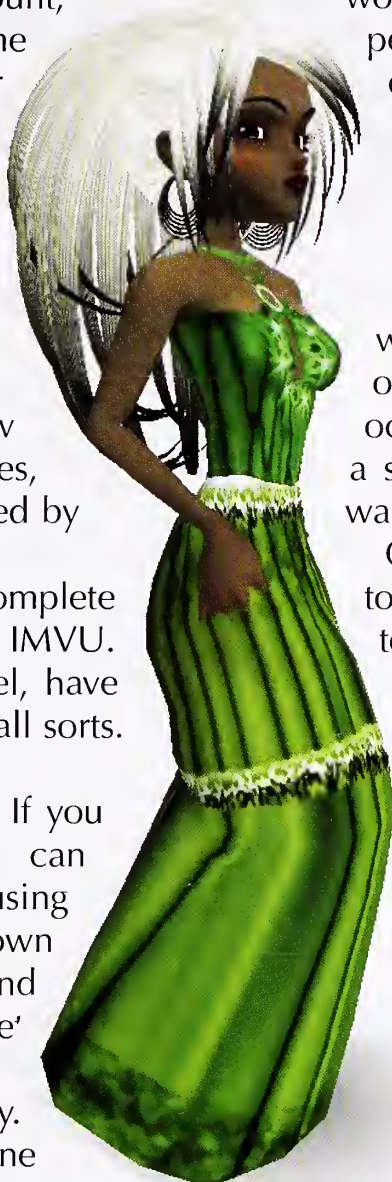
If you really want to get in to things, you



can purchase additional credits to continue your shopping. They are relatively inexpensive, and with a fat bank account, you can truly have some fun. In addition to regular members there are also developers within the IMVU community. These individuals create new products for IMVU members to purchase. They are constantly providing the virtual marketplace with new clothing, accessories, homes, furniture etc. to be purchased by the discerning avatar.

A girl could live out a complete existence in the world of IMVU. You can make friends, travel, have all sorts of encounters. Yes, all sorts. Did I mention the shopping?

It's a very friendly world. If you don't know anyone you can search out new friends by using various criteria to narrow down the field. If you still can't find anyone, you can simply let the system hook you up with a chat partner randomly. Since the community is online it is also worldwide. There is always a large selection of possible friends on line for you to chat with.



IMVU is an almost perfect world. Unlimited conversation is there at your fingertips. One word of caution though, as with many almost perfect things, IMVU can be addicting. If you decide to venture into this world, don't forget to come back up for air once in a while.

YouTube

Another fascinating place on the internet is www.youtube.com. There are lots of videos of roller skating cats, skydiving dogs, and the occasional dufus charging down a steep hill in a shopping cart. These are all wonderful time wasters, and I highly recommend them to you.

Once you've had your fill of these fascinating topics, there is also a wealth of information to be found here. If you do a search for keywords, makeup, transformation, disguise, among others you will discover that there is much to be learned. There are instructional videos on basic makeup, drag, false eyelashes and wigs.

I hope these two suggestions will help you through the long, hot summer ahead. Enjoy yourself, and once summer is over, get out there and be gorgeous.

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by Amanda Richards



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On My Mind



It was twenty years ago that a small group of 13 people met in a small office space in Wayne, Pa. That was the beginning of the Renaissance Education Association, Inc.

The story actually began nearly a year earlier when I wrote a letter to Angela Gardner responding to a personal ad she had placed in the *TV-TS Tapestry*. Angela and I met soon after and became fast friends. In January of 1987, Angela took me to a support group meeting in South Jersey. I remember thinking on the way there that it seemed ridiculous that we had to travel so far to a support group. Weren't there more of us on the Pennsylvania-side of the river?

At that meeting we met Alison Laing and Melanie Bryan, both from the Philadelphia suburbs and also interested in meeting in Pa. The final "co-conspirator", Trudy Henry, I had met at a Joyce Dewhurst Pocono weekend late in the previous year.

Since we all seemed to share a desire for a support group in Pa., we met in a suburban restaurant near my home in March of 1987. We agreed to call all of our TV/TS (that's what we called our community back then) friends and tell them that we would be holding a meeting at the offices of Dr. Wm. R. Stayton on the third weekend in May.

Eight people showed up, plus the five of us made 13 total. It was encouraging. We decided to keep doing it and the next month 14 people attended, but it was a different bunch than had attended in May! Hmmmm.

By September we had close to 50 people at the meeting and by our first anniversary there were over 100 regularly attending the meeting.

The rest, as they say, is history.

Times change. I recently attended the 20th anniversary meeting of the original group at what is now the Wayne Counseling Center. Alison Laing, Angela Gardner and I attended. Even "Dr. Bill" Stayton was there. Lots of old friends showed up and it was good to see them all.

But, it ain't the Renaissance it used to be. What had once been a progressive national educational organization seems reduced to its humble beginnings, a local support group.

I saw no one from the national board of directors present at the meeting. I am told at least one was there but she did not make an effort to speak to any of the three co-founders. We were not even introduced to the local officers. I would have handled this very differently, but, hey, I'm not running the group anymore.

As for Renaissance being a "national" organization, well, I feel they've abdicated the right to call themselves that. No one from the national attends any national-level events, except perhaps the IFGE convention held in Philadelphia every so often. After publishing a newsletter and then a magazine for nearly 15 years, nothing has issued from Renaissance in the last five, not even a single broadsheet. Okay, you're thinking, "I'll bet they do it by email." Nope. Nada, Zip, Zilch.

While we were talking at the anniversary meeting I mentioned the *Renaissance Chapter & Affiliate Handbook* and the *10th Anniversary History of Renaissance* compiled by Dr. Lee Ann Etscovitz. The audience looked at me as if I had mentioned the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. They did not have a clue that either publication existed. Later, the more I thought about that, the more annoyed I got thinking of all the hard work that had been poured into those publications which now lay ignored and neglected.

I am told that there is now an internecine war going on among the so-called chapters. A few have already seceded from the union and it looks like more will be leaving soon. The leadership at the national board is weak and has no vision. There is no mission for Renaissance as a national group anymore and, in my opinion, no reason for it to exist as a national organization. To quote David Spade, "There, I said it!"

The one good thing that came out of this anniversary celebration is that I reconnected with Alison Laing. We had been estranged for nearly 10 years due to huge political differences (back then) which now make no difference. Alison contacted me and said she was coming for the meeting and would I like to get together. I countered with an offer of dinner at my home and she accepted. We had a great time talking and catching up, then we went to the Renaissance meeting together.

Stay Frosty

— JoAnn Roberts



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